

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

June 27, 2000

Maricopa Association of Governments Office
302 North First Avenue, Suite 200, Saguaro Room,
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Wickenburg: Fred Carpenter, Vice-Chair
ADOT: Dan Lance
Avondale: Debbie Kohn for William Bates
Buckeye: Joe Blanton
Chandler: Patrice Kraus for Bryan Patterson
Gilbert: Tami Ryall
Glendale: Amy Rudibaugh for Jim Book
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel
Litchfield Park: Mike Cartsonis

Maricopa County: Chris Plumb for Tom Buick
Mesa: Jeff Martin
Paradise Valley: Bob Ciccarelli for Tom Martinsen
Peoria: Dan Nissen for David Moody
Phoenix: Don Herp for Tom Callow
RPTA: Ken Driggs
Scottsdale: John C. Little
Surprise: Ellis Perl

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING

Regional Bicycle Task Force: Maureen Mageau-DeCindis, RPTA for Eric Iwersen, Tempe

*Street Committee: Grant Anderson, Glendale

*ITS Committee: Jim Book

Pedestrian Advisory Group: Reed Kempton, Maricopa County Dept of Transportation

Telecommunications Advisory Group: Debbie Kohn, Avondale

* Members neither present nor represented by proxy.

OTHERS PRESENT

Shannon Diamond, MAG
Stuart Boggs, MAG
Chuck Eaton, ADOT
Dave MacDonald, Phoenix
Lynn Timmons, Phoenix
Bob Antila, RPTA
Peggy Carpenter, Scottsdale
George Wallace, ADOT

Terry Johnson, MAG
Dean Giles, MAG
Alan Kosecki, MAG
Paul Ward, MAG
Bill Hayden, ADOT
Henry Wall, Kimley-Horn
Larry Langer, Parsons Transportation
Bill Brickey, Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee

1. Call to Order

Fred Carpenter, Vice-Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. Approval of the May 23,, 2000 Meeting Minutes

The Vice-Chairman asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the May meeting. Chris Plumb offered a correction to the minutes, noting that he attended the May meeting for Tom Buick rather than Chuck Williams. Vice-Chairman Fred Carpenter stated that he was not in attendance at the May meeting. Amy Rudibaugh stated that Jim Book was present at

that meeting. Reed Kempton indicated that he was in attendance at the May meeting. There being no further corrections to the minutes, Chris Plumb moved to approve the May meeting minutes as amended. Debbie Kohn seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Call to the Audience

Vice-Chairman Carpenter asked if there were any members of the public present who would like to make a comment. There being no response the Vice-Chairman turned to the next item on the agenda, the Transportation Managers Report.

4. Transportation Manager's Report

Terry Johnson briefed the Committee on the status of MAG's conformity analysis. Johnson noted that the FY 2001-2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and FY 2000 update of the Long Range Transportation Plan had been found to be in conformity. Johnson then provided an overview of the process that led up to the recommendation to develop an Environmental Impact Statement for the South Mountain Parkway facility. Johnson noted that this recommendation was the result of a consensus arrived at by the South Mountain Agency Stakeholders Group which was formed by the MAG Regional Council.

Johnson also discussed the proposed change in scope for the SR 51/Loop 101 interchange which resulted from the City of Phoenix's request to accelerate design and construction of this interchange. Johnson also briefed the Committee on the FY 2000 Update of the MAG Management Systems Report.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

No action taken by the Committee.

6. MAG Transportation Management Systems Report FY 2001 Update

Paul Ward of MAG briefed the Committee on the Transportation Management Systems Report. Debbie Kohn asked if it would be possible to get a time line of events leading up to development of the FY2002-2006 Transportation Improvement Program. Terry Johnson noted that the time line for development of the TIP was included in the new Management Systems Report. Kohn responded that she would like to see a separate summary of the time line. There being no further discussion, Don Herp made a motion to accept the MAG Transportation Management Systems Report FY 2001 Update. Tami Ryall seconded the motion which was subsequently carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

7. Draft Methodology for Evaluating CMAQ Improvement Projects

Turning to the next order of business, Vice-Chairman Carpenter introduced Dean Giles of MAG who briefed the Committee on the draft methodology for evaluating CMAQ improvement projects. Giles noted that the methodology had been presented to the TRC last year and had since been refined. The revised methodology will be used to evaluate projects in the 2002-2006 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Giles noted that the methodology includes a description of project types and the modeling assumptions that

would be used. He told the Committee that he had taken the methodology to the modal committees for their review.

Jeff Martin asked Giles what impact the methodology would have on project selection. Giles replied that it would be used as a tool to rank projects along with the congestion management system. Martin felt that the methodology would have a significant impact on project rating. Amy Rudibaugh asked why a new methodology was needed at this time. Giles replied that the new methodology was a refinement of the version used last year. Chris Plumb suggested using the total project cost rather than the federal share in the formula. Asked if the Federal government had approved the new methodology, Giles replied that the new version had been sent out for interagency review and comment but no comments had been received to date.

Ken Driggs felt that the new methodology would contain a bias against transit projects since highway projects contain a lot of hidden costs. Patrice Kraus asked Giles what other criteria would be used to evaluate projects. Giles replied that a project's congestion management score (CMS) would be used along with the CMAQ methodology to rate projects. Giles pointed out that each modal committee would use mode specific criteria as part of their project evaluation. Patrice Kraus was concerned that the methodology's bias would result in all funds going to road projects. Plumb thought that the Committee was placing too much emphasis on the CMAQ score. He observed that the score was just an evaluation tool, the decision whether or not to select a specific project would still be an administrative one which would look at a series of factors and not just the CMAQ score.

Giles told the group that MAG would be soliciting projects from the member agencies and communities in August. Chris Plumb thought the schedule called for project solicitation in September. Terry Johnson replied that the schedule had been revised to submit projects requests by September 11, 2000. Tami Ryall indicated that she would like to see a written summary of the comments received from the modal committees.

8. Value Lane Study Status Report

Turning to the next item of business, Vice-Chairman Carpenter introduced Mark Schlappi of MAG who briefed the Committee on the status of the Value Lane Study. Schlappi told the group that the study was being conducted in two phases with the first phase looking at HOV lanes and the second phase dealing with value lanes. He explained that value lanes were HOV lanes that could be used by single occupant vehicles that paid a toll. Value lane use would tap into surplus capacity available on some HOV lanes.

Schlappi then introduced Larry Langer of Parsons Transportation Group, the consultant retained by MAG and ADOT for the study. Langer noted that highway construction will not keep up with traffic growth in the region. He observed that growing traffic demand would necessitate better utilization of existing highway lanes. One option would be to use surplus capacity on the HOV system for value or High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. Langer described how the current study would evaluate existing and future utilization of the HOV system. Langer told the Committee that as part of the study's public outreach process, they had conducted a poll of 500 licensed driver. This poll would be supplemented by use of a focus group to further document the public's perception and acceptance of HOV and HOT lanes. Referring to the poll results, Langer noted that transit scored high with respondents and there was strong support for HOV lanes even among people who did not use them.

9. Report on the MAG Freeway Program

Terry Johnson of MAG briefed the Committee on the MAG freeway program. Referring to a proposed change in scope for the SR 51/101 freeway interchange project, Johnson introduced Charles Eaton of the Arizona Department of Transportation. Eaton told the Committee that the City of Phoenix was sponsoring a loan from the State Infrastructure Bank to accelerate construction of this interchange. He noted that Phoenix had originally requested an extension of SR 51 to the Black Mountain Parkway. However, the City of Phoenix has withdrawn its request for the extension and certain design change are needed to handle increased ramp volumes. Johnson pointed out that the change in scope did not represent a change in policy so no action was required by the Committee.

10. ADOT Noise Abatement Policy

Terry Johnson of MAG asked that this agenda item be withdrawn from discussion. Jeff Martin asked why it should be withdrawn. Johnson replied that Eric Anderson was on vacation and was not in attendance. He also noted that the noise control issue with ADOT had not yet been resolved. Vice-Chairman Carpenter then turned to the next order of business the final close out of the MAG Federally Funded Program for FY 2000.

11. Final Close out of the MAG Federally Funded Program for FY 2000

Vice-Chairman Carpenter introduced Paul Ward of MAG who briefed the Committee on the final closeout of the MAG federally funded program. Ward noted that MAG was using 99.6 percent of its obligation authority. With three months left until the end of the federal fiscal year, Paul told the Committee that the organization might benefit from some redistributed obligation authority. With this in mind, he had asked the member communities to supply him with contingency projects that could tap into this money if it becomes available. The Vice-Chairman asked Ward if these funds could be used on transit projects. Ward replied that they could be used on many types of transit projects, especially the purchase of buses and vanpools, as had happened in previous years. Ken Driggs asked if the funding possibilities were still open. Ward indicated that they were. Patrice Kraus of Chandler wanted to know when MAG would hear about any redistributed authority. Ward replied that he would probably hear somewhere from late July to mid August.

Ken Driggs asked if the Consolidated Canal project in Mesa could be funded through the closeout. Jeff Martin observed that he didn't know if the project will be ready to go in time to use this funding. Chris Plumb felt that a higher priority should be given to projects in next year's transportation program than new projects or additional funding for existing projects. Ward indicated that the Consolidated Canal project could be regarded as a contingent project in the closeout. It had been officially carried forward to FY 2001 but, if it was able to obligate in time and sufficient funds were available, it could proceed. If it could not obligate in time, or if the funds did not become available for any reason, other priorities would then be considered. Ken Driggs requested that the acceleration of transit vehicles also be considered as a contingent project.

As there were no other projects submitted for consideration, Ken Driggs moved that the Mesa: Consolidated Canal project should be the first priority for any uncommitted, additional or redistributed OA that MAG may receive, followed by the advancement of the purchase

of transit vehicles from future years. Jeff Martin seconded the motion which was then carried unanimously.

12. New Regional Transportation Plan

Vice-Chairman Carpenter introduced Stuart Boggs of MAG who briefed the Committee on revisions to the proposed scope of work for the new regional transportation plan. Boggs told the Committee that subsequent to his presentation at the May TRC meeting he had presented the scope of work to the MAG modal and technical committees for comment. Boggs noted that comments received included the need to pursue an extensive public outreach process. This was seen as critical since the public was perceived to be “planned out”. Another comment heard at several of the committees was that the planning effort should be integrated with local planning efforts since the land use and transportation plans being developed by the cities and towns will affect the location and types of transportation investments that will have to be made. Mike Cartsonis echoed this concern. Debbie Kohn suggested including operations and maintenance costs in the plan along with capital costs.

Jeff Martin made a motion to approve advertising for consultant support for development of the first phase of the Regional Transportation Plan and to increase the project budget by \$230,000 to \$500,000. Ken Driggs seconded the motion which was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

13. South Mountain Corridor Recommendation

Vice-Chairman Carpenter introduced Terry Johnson who gave an overview of the South Mountain Corridor study and discussions. He told the group that the South Mountain Agency Stakeholders group formed by the Regional Council in January, 2000 had reached a consensus on how to proceed with development of this corridor. The Stakeholders felt that the environmental, social and funding issues raised by this project were such that development of a full environmental impact study would be prudent. Based on this consensus, MAG staff were recommending the following: one, that \$6 million be allocated for development of an EIS and preliminary engineering for a South Mountain Parkway facility; two, that the corridor be made eligible for \$5 million in right of way protection funds; and, three, that \$18.954 million be set aside for right of way acquisition.

Vice-Chairman Carpenter asked if this would take away funds from other transportation projects? Johnson replied that these funds represent a reallocation of part of the \$85 million currently set aside in the ADOT Life Cycle Program for design and construction of an interim road facility in a portion of the South Mountain Parkway corridor. Patrice Kraus wondered if ADOT should be purchasing right of way before completing an EIS for the project. Johnson noted that federal guidelines specifically prohibit using advance right of way acquisition to justify a particular alignment. He also noted that ROW purchased in advance could be resold if the EIS identifies a different alignment.

Debbie Kohn asked if ROW purchases could be delayed until after the EIS was completed. Johnson replied that the EIS could take up to three years to complete and that in the interim the corridor would be vulnerable to development. Kohn asked if the Gila River Indian Community had been invited to participate in the discussions. Johnson replied that the

Indian Community had been represented in the Stakeholders group and had participated in the discussions that led to the consensus. Kohn then asked if the right of way crosses the Indian Community. Johnson indicated that the alignment at present does not cross the Indian Community.

Jeff Martin asked what process would be used to guide ROW protection and acquisition. Dan Lance of ADOT indicated that they would use the red letter notification process to identify development threats to the corridor.

Jeff Martin made a motion to amend the Draft FY 2001-2005 Transportation Improvement Program to include \$6 million in FY 2001 for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Design Concept Report for the South Mountain Parkway; identify the South Mountain Parkway as eligible for system-wide right-of-way protection funds totaling \$5 million per year FY 2001-2003; and authorize \$18.954 million in FY 2002 for advance right-of-way acquisitions throughout the corridor, as needed.

Dan Lance requested clarification that the funding identified in the staff recommendation represented a reallocation of a portion of the \$85 million already set aside for the South Mountain Parkway corridor. Johnson indicated that this would constitute such a reallocation. Lance then seconded Martin's motion. The subsequent vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

14. Final Phase Public Hearing

Stuart Boggs of MAG briefed the Committee on the final phase public involvement process. Boggs noted that a final phase open house and public hearing were held on June 26th at the offices of MAG. At the public hearing only two members of the public gave statements. Joseph Ryan of Sun City West voiced concern over the proposed lane reductions in the Light Rail Transit (LRT) corridor. He also felt that the project as proposed would not improve air quality. Diane Barker of Phoenix argued that the single family car will remain the preferred transportation mode. She felt that MAG, RPTA and the valley communities should inventory their existing assets and utilize them more efficiently. Barker argued that the proposed rail system would be ten times more expensive than flexible buses which she felt could provide a similar level of service to the LRT. Boggs also informed the Committee that the period for accepting public input had been extended to July 10th.

15. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on July 25th at 10:00 a.m. in the Saguaro Room, 2nd floor, MAG offices.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.